

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 SAA-02 CIAE-00 NSAE-00
NSCE-00 SSO-00 ICAE-00 INRE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10
L-03 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 IO-13 ACDA-12 SY-05 MCT-01
SSM-03 HA-05 TRSE-00 AID-05 /106 W
-----016948 041038Z /12

O 041005Z JUL 78
FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 8535
INFO SIT-REP COLLECTIVE IMMEDIATE
USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER
USNMR SHAPE BELGIUM
CINCUSNAVEUR, LONDON ENG
CINCUSAFE RAMSTEIN AB GER
COMSIXTHFLT
CTF SIX ZERO
CTF SIX ONE
CTF SIX TWO
CTG SIX ZERO PT TWO
FICEURLANT NORFOLK VA
FOSIF ROTA SPAIN
DIA WASHDC
CINCUSAREUR HEIDELBERG GER
USDOCOSOUTH NAPLES IT

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE BEIRUT 3697

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINS, PINT, MILI, ASEC, LE
SUBJ: LEBANESE SITUATION: JULY 4, 1978, 1200 HOURS LOCAL

REF: BEIRUT 3693 (DTG 031528Z JUL 78)

1. SUMMARY: AN UNEASY CEASEFIRE IS HOLDING IN THE EAST
BEIRUT AREA. SYRIA REPORTEDLY MADE THE CEASEFIRE CONTIN-
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GENT ON ITS RIGHT TO REDEPLOY SYRIAN FORCES IN A WAY THAT
WILL ALLOW THEM TO CONTROL THE ENTIRE EASTERN SECTOR. THE
PALESTINE NEWS AGENCY STRESSED THAT THE PLO WAS NOT INVOL-
VED IN THE FIGHTING. END SUMMARY.

2. UNEASY CEASEFIRE

A. AN UNEASY CEASEFIRE SETTLED OVER EAST BEIRUT AT ABOUT 2115 HOURS ON JULY 3 AFTER THREE DAYS OF HEAVY FIGHT. IT IS HOLDING FOR NOW. THE CEASEFIRE WAS AGREED UPON BY THE LEBANESE FRONT'S MILITIA AND THE SYRIAN-DOMINATED ARAB DETERRENT FORCE (ADF). BACHIR GEMAYEL AT 2000 HOURS JULY 3 BROADCAST A STATEMENT OVER PHALANGIST VOICE OF LEBANON TELLING THE MILITIAMEN TO "TRULY AND COMPLETELY" ABIDE BY THE CEASEFIRE DECISION. L'ORIENT - LE JOUR SAID MORE DAMAGE HAD BEEN DONE TO ASHRAFIYAH DURING THE LAST THREE DAYS THAN DURING THE ENTIRE 1975-76 WAR.

B. PHALANGE SPOKESMAN ON JULY 3 DENIED PREVIOUS REPORT OF VOICE OF LEBANON THAT A SIZEABLE SYRIAN FORCE WAS MOVING SOUTH ALONG THE COAST ROAD. HE SAID THE FORCE CONSISTED ONLY OF A CONVOY OF SIX TRUCKS CARRYING SOLDIERS AND LIGHT ARMS. SOME NEW SYRIAN TROOPS FROM THE NORTH HAVE REPORTEDLY MOVED INTO THE BEIRUT PORT AREA, HOWEVER.

C. DURING THE FIGHTING ON JULY 3, THE SYRIANS MADE AN ATTEMPT TO OCCUPY THE PHALANGE MILITARY HEADQUARTERS AT QARANTINA, BUT WERE REPULSED, ACCORDING TO THE VOICE OF LEBANON. TWO ARTILLERY ROUNDS (PRESUMABLY STRAYS) IMPACTED NEAR BAABDA PALACE WOUNDING ONE LEBANESE GENDARME. DURING THE AFTERNOON JULY 3, FOUR SHELLS EXPLODED NEAR THE SPORTS CITY IN WEST BEIRUT. DURING THE EVENING, ONE SHELL EXPLODED IN THE CORNICHE MASRAA AREA, KILLING THE SON OF SIDON DEPUTY LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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YOUSSEF HAMMOUD.

3. SYRIAN CONDITIONS. ACCORDING TO L'ORIENT-LE JOUR, THE SYRIANS HAVE MADE THE CEASE-FIRE CONDITIONAL ON REDEPLOYMENT OF THEIR FORCES IN A WAY WHICH WOULD ALLOW THEM TO CONTROL THE ENTIRE EASTERN SECTOR. THE SYRIANS HAVE ALREADY SUCCEDED IN OCCUPYING SEVERAL NEW POSITIONS IN THE AREA, THE PAPER SAID. THE SYRIANS ALSO WARNED THAT IF THEY WERE PROVOKED, THEY WOULD RETALIATE EVEN MORE VIOLENTLY THAN THEY HAD DURING THE PRESENT ROUND, L'ORIENT-LE JOUR REPORTED.

4. INTERVIEW WITH BACHIR GEMAYEL.

A. RADIO MONTE CARLO CARRIED AN INTERVIEW OF BACHIR GEMAYEL ON JULY 3. ASKED WHAT CAUSED THE RECENT EVENTS, HE REPLIED: "WE HAVE NO IDEA. IT WAS SAID THAT FOUR PERSONS WERE KIDNAPPED, BUT WE ARE NOT AWARE OF ANY SUCH ATTEMPT. WE DO NOT KNOW WHO WAS KIDNAPPED, AND WE WERE TRULY SURPRISED BY THESE EVENTS."

B. ASKED WHETHER THE CEASEFIRE WOULD HOLD, HE REPLIED: "IT IS IN THE INTEREST OF EVERYONE THAT IT BE RESPECTED. WE

HAVE NO INTEREST IN HAVING THIS OPERATION CONTINUE. I THINK THAT THE SYRIAN SIDE ALSO HAS NO INTEREST IN HAVING THESE EVENTS CONTINUE, BECAUSE NOBODY KNOWS WHERE THIS STORY COULD LEAD."

C. ASKED IF THERE HAD BEEN ANY MILITARY ADVANCES, HE REPLIED, "ONE CANNOT SPEAK OF ADVANCES ON THE GROUND, FOR THE ADF SINCE ITS ARRIVAL IN LEBANON HAS WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF ITS MISSION ENTERED EVERYWHERE IN LEBANON AND THERE WAS NO REGION FORBIDDEN TO IT. . . ."

5. Wafa STATEMENT. IN A BULLETIN ISSUED ON JULY 3, THE PALESTINE NEWS AGENCY (Wafa) STRESSED THAT THE PLO WAS NOT INVOLVED IN THE FIGHTING BETWEEN THE ADF AND CONSERVATIVE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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FORCES. Wafa SAID IT WAS ISSUING THIS STATEMENT TO COUNTER-ACT "ALLEGATIONS" OF THE ISOLATIONIST CAMP AND IN SPITE OF THE FACT THAT SHELLS HAD FALLEN IN REFUGEE CAMPS AND CAUSED 16 CASUALTIES.

6. RECEPTION CANCELLED. IN VIEW OF THE SECURITY SITUATION, THE AMBASSADOR HAS CANCELLED HIS JULY 4 RECEPTION.

DECONTROLLED FOLLOWING 9/4/78.
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